

Conway kills bill to limit powers of police in bars

By MICHAEL DRESSER

SUN STAFF

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A Baltimore senator scuttled a contentious bill yesterday that would have limited police powers to enforce laws in the city's taverns, claiming to have successfully made her point.

Sen. Joan Carter Conway, a Democrat, said she was taking the action in response to concerns expressed by community groups that the bill would make it harder for police to control public nuisances.

Conway contended the bill would not have had that effect, but said it had been undermined by "all the mistruths that have been told." She moved to send the bill back to committee — in effect killing it.

Democratic state Sen. Nathaniel J. McFadden, chairman of the city Senate delegation, suggested that Conway kill the bill. McFadden said the Police Department and Mayor Martin O'Malley had agreed to change the way officers deal with such establishments.

Conway had been criticized for offering legislation that appeared to protect the turf of the city liquor board, an agency that employs her husband as a deputy chief inspector. She denied that her actions were improper.